

Technical “Large” Cyber Incident Handling Steps



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Montana Information Security Advisory Council

Best Practices Workgroup – Large Cyber Incident Handling

1. Purpose

The Best Practices workgroup was tasked to provide national industry standard best practices for Incident Response and Incident Handling of large cyber related incidents. This document is to provide technical best practices on dealing with a high or critical cyber incident.

2. Policy

Large Cyber Incident Handling applies to the following controls found within the Information Security Policy.

a. Information Security Policy

- Respond

- 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7.2

b. Information Security Policy – Appendix A

- Incident Response (IR)

- IR-1
- IR-4
- IR-5
- IR-6
- IR-7

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3. Large Cyber Incident Response Steps

Examples of what can be considered a large incident:

- Malicious code or computer virus incident that affects a large group of people (agency size dictates the definition of Large – greater than 25%)
- Natural disaster that affects computer systems
- Unscheduled power outage with a break in services
- Unscheduled enterprise network outage
- Enterprise hacking attempt including alteration of static web site content
- Physical infrastructure sabotage or failure
- System compromise
- Cyber terrorism
- Denial of Service (DoS) attack
- Keylogger incident
- Loss or alteration of data including confidential and sensitive data
- Loss or alteration involving federal tax information, protected health information, PII, or personal financial information, Critical Infrastructure, Military, Law Enforcement, or University Information.

Preparation Phase:

1. Each organization shall develop and document an Information Systems Incident Response (ISIRT) team and be prepared to handle incidents.
2. Organizations shall use the ISIRT template provided as a model in developing an incident handling plan within their organization.

Detection & Analysis Phase:

NOTE Refer to the ISIRT manual for detailed information.

1. Actions performed on the information system should cease, or be kept to a minimum if possible in order to preserve the integrity of evidence.
2. Once confirmed the incident is real the organizations Information Systems Incident Response Team (ISIRT) should be activated by authorized management.
3. The Incident Commander (IC) of the organizations ISIRT must call the SITSD Service Desk (444-2000) within 24 hours of incident. The IC will document the time when this occurs. The SITSD Service Desk will create a service ticket and direct the IC to the [Incident Report Form](#) (agency shall fill out the Form). Once the Service Desk ticket is created, only the Security Threat Group can view the contents of the ticket. The Security Threat Group is made up of

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reporting agency, SITSD-Information Systems Security Office (ISSO) and Montana All-Threat Intelligence Center (MATIC) can view the contents of the ticket. See [Security Incident Flowchart](#).

4. Review of SIEM data, packet captures (PCAP), automated detection logs, 3rd party information, IDS/IPS logs, etc. should be performed verifying validity and scope of the incident.
5. The IC will continue documenting important events, with timestamps, as they unfold until a delegated authority is assigned to take over this duty.
6. Notification to
 - a. Risk Management and Tort Defense Division (RMTD) will be made immediately (444-2421). RMTD Report form must also be completed and submitted to them. Information gathered from the [Incident Report Form](#) can be used to fill out [RMTD Report form](#).
 - b. If incident involves sensitive data immediately report loss or theft to appropriate law enforcement agencies.
 - c. If incident involves Federal Tax Information (FTI) a notification to the Office of Safeguards no later than 24 hours after identification of possible issue involving FTI. Call the Denver TIGTA Field Division at 303-291-6102 or National Office Hotline 800-589-3718.
 - d. If incident involves Protected Health Information (PHI) the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) must be called at 1-800-368-1019.
 - e. If incident involves Social Security Information the Social Security Administration must be called at 1-800-269-0271.
7. The [Incident Report](#) should be completed as soon as possible.

Containment Phase:

8. If the system is a physical device and is running destructive software (formatting, deleting, removing or wiping information), power to the system should be disconnected immediately to preserve evidence that is left on the machine if possible (pulling the plug). A similar action should be performed on virtual machines by performing a “Power Off” action. If the system is not running destructive software do not pull the power.
9. If the incident has the potential for damage and/or theft of resources such as sensitive data, then a quick **netstat -a -o -b** using the cmd command line tool with administrative privileges should be run and results saved. If the information system is a virtual machine, then a complete

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snapshot, including memory, will be taken. Internet connectivity on the system(s) will be disabled after performing these steps.

10. If the organization has sandboxing capabilities and it is determined that there is acceptable risk with no legal ramifications to gather threat intelligence, then immediate redirection to the sandboxed environment will be done. This could be in the form of strict network segmentation not allowing specific subnets to communicate with each other. This is in order to gather information to determine if, or what, other systems may be involved.
11. If the system is communicating with any IP addresses and domain names for known Command and Control (C2) channels, those IP addresses and domain names should be blocked at the perimeter.
12. If determined forensic investigation of an information system is needed (determined by agency ISIRT), any further interactions with the information system(s) by IT staff should immediately stop. System administrators must take into account that access to a physical device through either a USB or, if possible, a network connection must be available to the forensic investigators.
13. A Chain of Custody will be established by a Digital Forensics Analyst if there is any possibility of a legal investigation. Limiting physical access to the information system is a must in order to preserve the integrity of the Chain of Custody.
14. Forensic analysis by a Digital Forensic team, or 3rd party forensic company, will begin. An attempt to perform triage forensics will be prioritized in order to provide system administrators and upper level management with critical information that may help with the containment and/or eradication phases. Management must understand that full forensic analysis of system(s) could take a long time.

Eradication Phase:

15. After containment, eradication should be performed to eliminate components of the incident. Identifying all affected hosts within the organization is critical so they can be remediated. Some incidents may not require harsh eradication techniques and actions taken should be approved by upper level management.
16. Actions such as deleting malware, disabling breached user accounts, identifying and mitigating vulnerabilities, or complete rebuild of the information systems should be performed if approved by management.
17. Deactivation of the organizations ISIRT can be performed at this time. Documentation created during the ISIRT will be collected for use in the post-incident report.

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Recovery Phase:

18. Once the incident on information system(s) have been eradicated returning affected systems to normal operation can begin. This may involve actions such as restoring from clean backups, rebuilding systems, installing patches, changing passwords, and tightening network security.
19. Higher level of system logging and/or network monitoring should be considered on all systems within an organization due to the increased chance of system(s) being attacked again.
20. Confirmation systems are functioning normally and vulnerabilities are remediated should be performed to prevent similar incidents.

Post-Incident Activity:

21. Documentation created during the incident should be used to prepare a post incident report. This report should include items such as cause, Plan of Actions and Milestones (POA&M) or Gap analysis, lessons learned, cost, need for evidence retention, recommendations for immediate action, and long term goals to prevent another similar incident.
22. Information sharing to the Security Threat Group and other organizations should be considered to help prevent similar incidents to others.

See next page for Incident Handling Checklist

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Incident Handling Checklist

	Action	Completed
Detection and Analysis		
1.	Determine whether an incident has occurred	
1.1	Analyze the precursors and indicators	
1.2	Look for correlating information	
1.3	Perform research (e.g., search engines, knowledge base)	
1.4	As soon as the handler believes an incident has occurred, begin documenting the investigation and gathering evidence	
2.	Prioritize handling the incident based on the relevant factors (functional impact, information impact, recoverability effort, etc.)	
3.	Report the incident to the appropriate internal personnel and external organizations	
Containment, Eradication, and Recovery		
4.	Acquire, preserve, secure, and document evidence	
5.	Contain the incident	
6.	Eradicate the incident	
6.1	Identify and mitigate all vulnerabilities that were exploited	
6.2	Remove malware, inappropriate materials, and other components	
6.3	If more affected hosts are discovered (e.g., new malware infections), repeat the Detection and Analysis steps (1.1, 1.2) to identify all other affected hosts, then contain (5) and eradicate (6) the incident for them	
7.	Recover from the incident	
7.1	Return affected systems to an operationally ready state	
7.2	Confirm that the affected systems are functioning normally	
7.3	If necessary, implement additional monitoring to look for future related activity	
Post-Incident Activity		
8.	Create a follow-up report	
9.	Hold a lessons learned meeting (mandatory for major incidents, optional otherwise)	

Cichonski, Paul. Millar, Tom. Grance, Tim. Scarfone, Karen. "Computer Incident Handling Guide" *National Institute of Standards and Technology*. NIST, August 2012, Web. 1 April 2016

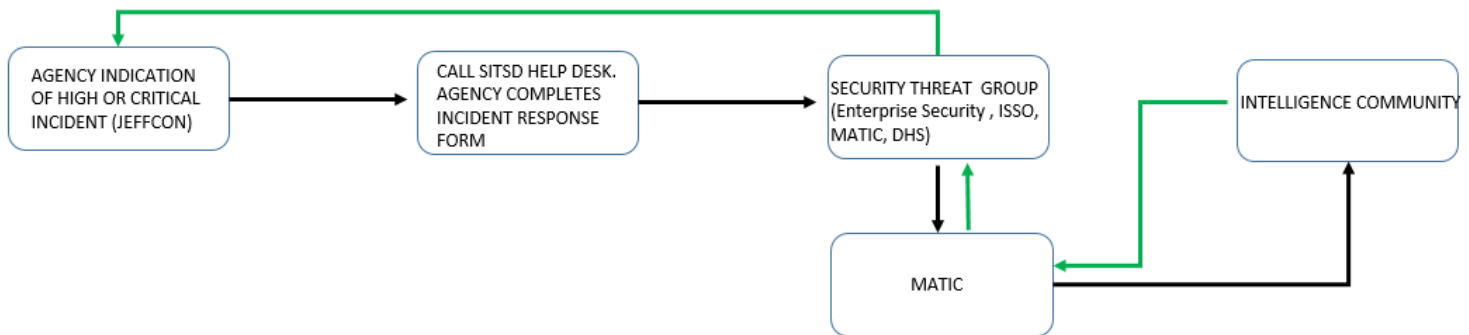
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Dissemination of Security Incident Form

Security Incident Flowchart:



Initiation of Security Incident Form:

1. Best Practices Working Group Large Incident Response is initiated when an organization, department, or agency discovers or is notified of a large incident (a high or critical incident based on the JeffCon scale).
2. The Incident Response Form is filled out when reaching Step 3 in the Large Incident Response Steps; contacting the SITSD Help Desk.

Dissemination of Security Incident Form:

1. After completing the Security Incident Form, the SITSD Help Desk sends the form to the Security Threat Group.
2. The Security Threat Group conducts analysis on the incident and distributes form and analysis to the MATIC as well as relevant affected agencies if warranted.
3. The MATIC passes raw information to the Intelligence Community (DHS, FBI, CYBERCOM...)
4. If possible, the Intelligence Community conducts analysis and sends feedback to the MATIC.
5. The MATIC passes feedback to the Security Threat Group.
6. The Security Threat Group distributes findings and feedback to the originating agency.

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Information Security Incident Report Form:

[Click here for latest form.](#)



STATE OF MONTANA INFORMATION SECURITY INCIDENT REPORT FORM



State Agency:	
Security Contact Information:	
Incident Reported By:	

Incident Title:	
Incident Number:	
Report Date:	
Date & Time of Incident:	
Date & Time Resolved:	

Statement of Incident: (Describe the type of Incident, how incident was discovered, level of unauthorized access attained, what did the event accomplish, the impact to your services (offline, length of time), did the incident affect any sensitive data (PII, FTI, HIPPA), what is the current system status)

Impact of the Incident/Systems Affected:

IP Address(es)
Hostname(s)
Purpose of System(s)
Operating System & Version
Ports of Communication Utilized
Physical Location
Attack Vector Utilized / Exploited
Evidence discovered
Additional Details

Technical Details:

Immediate Actions:

Steps Taken to Prevent Recurrence:

Description of Attachments
(if applicable, such as logs,
reports or screenshots):